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ABSTRACT

This paper addresses nontraditional methods and issues involved in presenting a productive undergraduate political science course that provides the knowledge, skills, and abilities to aid good citizenship and a variety of career choices. This educators incorporated team teaching, cross training, original research, and small group work, and invited local organizations to supply investigative topics to the class. Despite problems associated with these issues, methods teachers should consider carefully adopting several of the features of this course. Cross training would require teachers to explore techniques associated more with comparative politics and international relations, and both cross training and original research would necessitate a class separate from statistics. Team teaching and small group work may also be unavoidable. As long as the rules and expectations are recognized and enforced among all participants, team teaching, small group work, and even community outreach can succeed. Appended are instructor evaluations, course syllabi, and additional information. (Author/BT)

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Team-Teaching an Interactive and Community-Based Methods Course: A Case Study.

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ABSTRACT

This paper reviews the problems and prospects of a course that addressed these concerns. BIS 302: *Interdisciplinary Principles*, a core requirement of the Bachelor of Interdisciplinary Studies program at Arizona State University, was taught and developed by political scientists Kevin Ellsworth, John Linantud, and Dave Wells in the 2001-2002 academic year, and by Linantud again in Summer 2002. BIS 302 incorporated team-teaching, cross-training, original research, and small group work, and invited local organizations to supply investigative topics to the class. Despite problems associated with these issues, methods teachers should consider carefully adopting several of the features of this course. Cross training would require teachers to explore techniques associated more with comparative politics and international relations, and both cross-training and original research would necessitate a class separate from statistics. Team-teaching and small group work may also be unavoidable. As long as the rules and expectations are recognized and enforced among all participants, team-teaching, small groupwork, and even community outreach can succeed.

I. INTRODUCTION

The undergraduate methods class can be among the most productive in political science if it provides the knowledge, skills and abilities that facilitate good citizenship and a variety of career choices, including post-baccalaureate degrees. Faculty and students, however, often find learning about research methods dull and bothersome. What changes to the traditional format might improve this sad state of affairs?[1]

This paper reviews the problems and prospects of a course that addressed these concerns. BIS 302: *Interdisciplinary Principles*, a core requirement of the Bachelor of Interdisciplinary Studies program at Arizona State University, was taught and developed by political scientists Kevin Ellsworth, John Linantud, and Dave Wells in the 2001-2002 academic year, and by Linantud again in Summer 2002.[2] BIS 302 incorporated team-teaching, cross-training, original research, and small group work, and invited local organizations to supply investigative topics to the class. Despite problems associated with these changes to the traditional format, some elements of BIS 302 should become mainstream.

II. COURSE OVERVIEW

Like a standard methods course, BIS 302 introduced fundamental concepts and principles, including research questions and design, laws, theories, hypotheses, variables, measurement, and causality. Breaking with the traditional format, BIS 302 reinforced these concepts with original investigation for local community organizations.

Basic course logistics reflected issues common to large universities. The three co-instructors actually taught the same course twice in both Fall 2001 and Spring 2002, or four times overall. In both terms, they shared lecture duties for two Monday sections of about 100 students each, and led Wednesday breakout sections of about 30 students each. Each instructor grouped the breakout students into teams of 5-6 people, and matched them with local organizations that supplied research topics. Students completed three papers based on the research specialties of the three instructors: a background report, an original survey and analysis, and qualitative investigation. To conclude each semester, each undergraduate team wrote a summary report and presented its findings to representatives from the community.

III. ELEMENTS OF THE COURSE

This section describes, evaluates, and ranks the elements of BIS 302 in order of the estimated faculty commitment of time and effort required to successfully incorporate each feature into a political science methods class. The rankings are my own, but they reflect student evaluations, course notes and emails, the insights of Kevin Ellsworth and Dave Wells (see Appendices 1 and 2), and the experience of teaching five sections of BIS 302 from Fall 2001 through Summer 2002.[3] Most of the analysis comes from the 2001-2002 year.

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[1] "Symposium: Teaching Undergraduate Methods," (articles by Greg Adams, Rosalee Clawson, Aaron Hoffman, and James A. McCann, Marie Hojnacki, Kenneth Janda, Michael S. Lewis-Beck, Peter Stone, and Sarah Poggione) *The Political Methodologist*, Vol. 10, No. 1 (Fall 2001).

[2] Professors Brian McCormick and Dave Thomas of the Bachelor of Interdisciplinary Studies program at Arizona State University pioneered much of the format in the 2000-2001 academic year. Professors Ellsworth and Wells have continued with the course at Arizona State. Linantud is now at the University of Houston Downtown.

[3] Bachelor of Interdisciplinary Studies, Arizona State University, "BIS 302: Interdisciplinary Principles Course Evaluations," Fall 2001, Spring 2002, Summer 2002.

1. Technology

Summary

The Monday lectures in 2001-2002 utilized computer projections of Microsoft Word and Power Point, VHS tapes, and the web. Dave Wells organized a course homepage, housed by Arizona State and modeled by Blackboard, that provided 24-hour access to course materials, grades, and chat rooms. Kevin Ellsworth inserted links to an online syllabus and anonymous online peer review system from his university homepage. Finally, we asked the class to use Microsoft Excel for survey data entry and analysis. The assignments did not require regression or other advanced techniques, and Excel was more available on and off campus than SPSS.

Weaknesses[4]

One weakness was purely logistical: Arizona State did not have multimedia classrooms for the breakout sections. As a result, only one section per semester was able to use the computer projection in the lecture hall for its group presentations. A second problem was uneven experience and comfort with Excel and Power Point among students. If students were unwilling to learn how to use the software, others assumed a greater workload, or designated themselves as programming specialists and refused other tasks. Both tendencies yielded late work and group tensions. A third problem applied to the faculty. Regrettably, we occasionally used technology as a substitute for old-fashioned organization and explanation of complex material. Saying "its on the website" rather than actually teaching the material did not please many students.

Strengths

A multimedia classroom proved to be a necessity, not a luxury, for teaching people weaned on Playstation. The course website also added flexibility to the traditional lecture and discussion format. In other ways students were ahead of their teachers. One research team found that a majority of survey respondents on campus had illegally downloaded music, an exercise that requires adeptness with technology that was largely unavailable only a few years ago. Moreover, undergraduates regularly created excellent Power Point slideshows.

2. Team-Teaching

Summary

The first planning session between Ellsworth, Linantud, and Wells in the summer of 2001 was scheduled for two hours, but lasted nearly four. By the time the meeting broke up, the syllabus had ballooned to accommodate everyone's concerns (see Appendix 3).[5] Consultation via email, telephone, and office chats produced an array of problem-solving and adjustments over the next two terms. For example, student attendance on Mondays became an issue in Fall 2001. To rectify this deficiency for Spring 2002, the team decided to take roll and replace a set of quizzes and homework assignments with a midterm and final exam.

The division of classroom labor proved to be the most stable element of BIS 302. Both terms opened with Monday lectures by Linantud on basic research concepts and directions for the background report. Wells followed with several Mondays on survey research and directions for that report, and Ellsworth closed each semester with lectures on qualitative and ethnographic

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[4] Many, if not all, of the "weaknessess" described here could also be termed "difficulties" or "challenges" because they represent problems that can be solved. On the other hand, "weakness" makes the natural counterpart to "strength" and, to my mind, a more realistic evaluation of the course.

[5] The syllabi for Fall 2001 and Spring 2002 were roughly the same length.

investigation. Each instructor handled the advisement, adjudication, and grading of the respective breakout sections, with weekly planning input from the primary lecturer.

Weaknesses

Team-teaching produced a course that took a different, but not alien, form than what each instructor had originally envisioned, and challenged students to adapt to new lecture styles. It had the most impact on the breakout sections. Despite the efforts at central oversight, breakout classes developed recognizable gaps in student-teacher interaction and expectations, grading methods, and workload that often reflected the personalities of each professor. This led to issues of inequality, and divided loyalties, that did not go unnoticed by students and faculty. Adjustments made for Spring 2002, namely across-the-board simplification of assignments, reduced these natural cleavages. Ellsworth and Wells continued to iron out related problems through the 2003 academic year.

Strengths

Many of the items discussed above could also be seen as strengths. Alternate teaching styles, for example, probably helped as many students as it hurt. In fact, the evolution of the course fulfilled the classic rationale for groupwork, since vetting opinions and proposals made a more balanced product. The multi-method format and cross-training, for instance, would have initially been impossible without team-teaching.

3. Cross-Training

Summary

The course required students to research the same topic using three different methodologies: historical-sociological, survey, and ethnographic. The primary challenge, however, fell to instructors. Each professor directed the parts of BIS 302 that dealt with his area of expertise, but also oversaw and graded breakout projects using all three methodologies. For example, Linantud lectured on writing a background paper, but supervised the development and analysis of 20 different survey and ethnographic reports. The same applied to Ellsworth and Wells. The course included very little instruction in statistics.

Weaknesses

Cross-training, along with original research and community outreach, demanded a pace that left little time for digestion of the abstract concepts inherent to methods. Another problem was the risk of inadequate oversight until instructors became familiar with the three methodologies. To address these problems, all three instructors scaled back the number of methods involved in the course in subsequent terms.

Strengths

Cross-training forced instructors to learn and teach new perspectives, which helped them acquire a better understanding of their original expertise. For undergraduates, the syllabus presented a truer "methods" course than a class focused almost entirely on statistics. Finally, this format compelled both faculty and students to become cognizant of the common principles, such as causality, thank link all positivistic methods.

4. Small Group Work

Summary

The scale of BIS 302 required both faculty and students to work in groups, and the paper has already discussed some of the responsibilities of team-teaching. Most of the students at Arizona State had prior experience with small groups before BIS 302, which was not surprising given the size of the university and its emphasis on developing interpersonal skills. Yet many undergraduates reported a negative experience with groupwork before BIS 302, which probably contributed to some of the problems discussed below. Each instructor used different methods to form the small groups, but most were based on student preference.

As one might expect, grading turned into a major concern for both faculty and students. In response, the instructors raised individual accountability: in Spring 2002, four of eleven graded assignments (participation, human subjects certificate, midterm exam, final exam) did not depend on groupwork compared to just one of thirteen (participation) in Fall 2001. In both terms, Ellsworth's spreadsheet formula, which calculated individual grades based on anonymous, online peer evaluations of effort and workload, proved invaluable. But despite the best efforts of all the co-instructors, some poor and apathetic students received grades they did not deserve.

Weaknesses

Some, but not all, of the following items applied to both faculty and students. The three co-instructors bore the responsibility to address internal disputes related to team-teaching, as well as those that surfaced in their breakout groups. Major problems included:

External Coordination. The pace and scope of the course necessitated off-classroom and off-campus obligations. Some local organizations, for instance, requested startup and regular communication or meetings with the breakout groups. Survey and ethnographic research, moreover, required students to work together off campus. Many people shifted extra work to their classmates because they could or would not complete these assignments in a timely manner because of work, class, and other commitments.

Miscommunication. As the year progressed, scheduled class time became the most reliable forum of communication over after-hours meetings, telephone, or email. Indeed, the instructors gradually converted parts of the Monday lectures, and nearly all of the Wednesday breakout sections, into groupwork and consultation periods.

Diffusion of Responsibility, Slackers, Weak links, and Hyper-Leadership. Four sides of the same coin. The attempt to distribute an equal workload often led to a reduction in overall responsibility if students assumed, or waited, for someone else to complete a task. Conversely, some students accused others of being "control freaks." In reality, certain individuals proved better suited to be leaders or slackers by education, temperament, intellect, or circumstance. The instructors considered, but never implemented, using a psychological pretest to seed more and less capable students among the various groups.

Clash of Personalities and Hormone Distraction. The most amorphous sources of tension were the hardest to address. Some, but not many, undergraduates simply did not get along, or flirted, giggled, and worked on each other instead of the class projects.

Solving these problems posed one of the biggest and widespread challenges of BIS 302. As noted earlier, each instructor managed group disputes in different ways. Linantud initially adopted the most lasses-faire approach, but realized that stricter oversight, and more explicit directions for assignments, helped forestall problems. Reconciliation proved impossible in only a few cases. Linantud severed all ties between individuals and their groups once in Fall 2001 and twice in Spring 2002. Lessons from that experience helped avert a fourth such dismemberment in

Summer 2002. To be fair, some participants vowed to "never work in groups again." But the best remedies came from students, many with prior campus or professional experience working in small groups, who found ways to work together without extensive instructor intervention.

Strengths

Again, the strengths of small group work applied to both faculty and students. The goal was to produce something with a value greater than the sum of its individual parts; in particular cases this became reality. The most successful groups proved that when handled correctly, the unusual format of the course could generate camaraderie and allow the team to accomplish tasks, such as cross-training and survey research, that would have been nearly impossible without teamwork.

Groupwork also pushed some individuals in new directions. Certain slackers from prior semesters became leaders in BIS 302. Among the co-instructors, Linantud was the least enthusiastic about online development. But since BIS 302, Linantud has become the sole professor in his new department to regularly use multimedia projection and a class website.

5. Original Research

Summary

Each student team conducted original research for their partner organizations. Of the core assignments, only the background report utilized published works and other material supplied by the community liaison. The survey and ethnographic reports, which consumed the bulk of the semester, required students to design and execute original research strategies with the oversight of the three co-instructors and input from the affiliate organizations.

Weaknesses

Legal Requirements. Arizona State required undergraduates to complete human subjects training before conducting field research, even though BIS 302 received no university or external funding. As a result all students completed a 1-2 hour online course.[6] Regardless of human participants training, no team was allowed to interact with minors, which limited the scope of some projects, such as the study of teenage attitudes on abortion or illegal downloading.

Limited Resources. BIS 302 could not provide money for photocopies, photographs, telephone calls, travel, postage, or other expenses. The instructors told students to not accept money from the affiliates, although some contacts did offer photocopies, franking, and long-distance landlines. The restriction of the course to a single term, however, hindered phone and mail surveys because of time-consuming problems associated with low response rates and follow-up communications. Nevertheless, some of the more organized groups did attempt such investigation. For most teams, however, weeks or more passed before students and instructors could hammer out a workable research design, much less start mail and telephone surveys.

Academic Integrity. The co-instructors confronted questions of academic honesty, and could not ensure that students were not making up data unless they trailed suspects around the clock, an impossibility. Input from students and community partners, photographs, and realistic anecdotes from the field helped alleviate these concerns.

Strengths

Original research fostered far greater efficacy among students than the traditional methods, or, for that manner, the average political science class. Rather than study how the process should work, students received firsthand knowledge of how research unfolds from broad

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[6] BIS 302 utilized the course housed by the U.S. National Institute of Health at (**http://cme.nci.nih.gov/**).

topics and questions into hypotheses, variables, data, and conclusions. Many projects continued to stumble and evolve, but mid-term adjustments also taught realistic lessons. In the best cases, the investment of time and interest over several months created a healthy and unusual atmosphere of teamwork and competition among small groups.

Original inquiry, and the umbrella of the Interdisciplinary Studies program, provided space for topics not explicitly related to politics. Rather than a hindrance, topical diversity became a strength because it drew students into more than one area of social research. The cross-training, moreover, made an appropriate common denominator and developed skills in design, data collection, and analysis that are critical to political science.

6. Community Outreach

Summary

The community partnership component of BIS 302 aimed, in no particular order, to publicize the Interdisciplinary Studies program, strengthen the relationship between Arizona State and the Phoenix area, assist local organizations, and provide hands-on experience to undergraduates. To recruit local contacts, the instructors canvassed non-profit websites, networked with other professors and campus organizations, and emailed and snail-mailed invitations with follow-up telephone calls (see Appendix 5). In the 2001-2002 academic year, Phoenix-area participants represented a cross-section of business, educational, entertainment, environmental, health, legal, neighborhood, non-profit, political, and religious institutions (see Appendix 6).

Weaknesses

The first and most immediate challenge of community outreach came from the sheer volume of administrative legwork necessary to prepare for, and complete, the course. Instructors had to identify, recruit, and communicate with dozens of metro area contacts. The expectations of the community associations presented a second problem. Linantud was probably guilty of overselling the course before the Spring 2002 term (see Appendix 5), but most participants recognized that BIS 302 was not an internship or job, that projects had to fit the parameters of the course, and that instructors had final authority over student teams. Nevertheless, a few lost sight of this because of poor communication or stubbornness. Unwanted input from local affiliates therefore constituted either guidance or meddling, depending on the point of view, and placed undergraduates in an awkward position.

To head off and resolve these problems, the instructors tried to communicate with associations directly. But Linantud opted to forego the external linkage in favor of student teams choosing their own research topics in Summer 2002 (see Appendix 6), and Ellsworth and Wells have downgraded the interaction with metro groups since Spring 2002.

Strengths

In the best cases, community outreach did in fact create a bond between Arizona State and the community. Many representatives expressed interest in continuing with the course or referred BIS 302 to other associations. Just as original research fostered student efficacy with methods training, cooperation with real-life associations enhanced student efficacy with the community, always a goal of political science. Finally, the working relationship encouraged professional contacts and networking for both faculty and students alike.

IV. CONCLUSION

After the 2001-2002 academic year, the three instructors agreed that the administrative, teaching, and advisory workload had overwhelmed both faculty and students. Despite these problems, they took steps to reduce and streamline the course rather than return to the traditional

format. Indeed, simple experience proved to be a critical factor in upgrading BIS 302, even from Fall 2001 to Spring 2002. The best undergraduate projects showed potential for publication, earned the respect of other students, and provided their community partners with material for a host of activities, including pilot studies, program applications, local presentations, and government hearings.

With these achievements in mind, methods teachers should consider carefully adopting several of the features of this course. Cross-training would require teachers to explore techniques associated more with comparative politics and international relations, and both cross-training and original research would necessitate a class separate from statistics. Team-teaching and small group work may also be unavoidable, at least initially, for cross-training and surveys. As long as the rules and expectations are recognized and enforced among all participants, team-teaching, small groupwork, and even community outreach can succeed. To be fair, such adjustments may entail raising the credit hours of the course, or stretching the course over more than a single term.

Finally, one should not underestimate the benefit of using new technology. But taking advantage of multimedia resources, and meeting student expectations, require familiarity with technology that remains alien to many faculty. To address these problems, Professor Heidi Ziemer of the University of Houston Downtown and colleagues at Rice University have developed a straightforward and fully online methods course that incorporates visual and technological stimulation to fit the cognitive parameters of the Gameboy generation. Though still a work in progress, the course is already online.[7]

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[7] Heidi Ziemer et al., "Online Statistics Education: An Interactive Web-based Course of Study," in progress (http://psych.rice.edu/online_stat/). The course is scheduled to remain freely avaliable on the web.

APPENDIX 1
CO-INSTRUCTOR EVALUATION: KEVIN ELLSWORTH

Self-Reflective Evaluation
Interdisciplinary Studies 302: Interdisciplinary Approaches to Human Inquiry

Overall, I am pleased with how well this course has worked both in its ability to cover a variety of methodological approaches to human inquiry and in the opportunities it provides students to apply their methodological skills to serve the community. In the past, the ambitions accompanying these strengths also proved to be our greatest challenges. Teaching teams did not always share the common vision and goals needed for course cohesion. Community service required a tremendous amount of coordination. Nevertheless, in Spring 2003 we have finally conquered those weaknesses and been able to fully capitalize on our strengths. Our team of three professors was able to craft a cohesive course focused on serving two community organizations: one seeking to process data on domestic violence in Arizona; the other, a group seeking to improve patients' experiences in hospitals. We were able to unify our large and small group classes so that each played a vital and integrated role in the course. We were able to present the material in a way that feels, looks, and acts much more like one truly interdisciplinary course rather than a mosaic of multimethodological tasks.

Our use of technology has been vital in all of these efforts. The internet provided a crucial environment to enable group and class coordination, to elicit peer evaluations, and to provide the students course materials and links to our community organizations.

In summary this course exhibits the following strengths:

- Great concept of applied methods in community service
- Good use of team teaching to focus three instructors on three methodological skills
- Excellent effort to unify the various methods, large and small class settings, and theory and practice into one cohesive interdisciplinary course.
- Great use of myASU (course website) to compliment students' in-class and applied experiences.
- Successful translation of campus course into a fully online environment.

What has improved with this teaching attempt?

- Better coordination with fewer community organizations
- Better coordination among three teachers to ensure cohesion of course.

APPENDIX 2
CO-INSTRUCTOR EVALUATION: DAVE WELLS

Thoughts and Reflections on Community Organization-Based Research Projects in a Research Methods Course

BIS 302 "Interdisciplinary Approaches to Human Inquiry" was based on the premise that we could teach research methods AND make a difference in the community at the same time. The question was how best to do this.

Initially some colleagues had used student research teams to do half semester research projects with a few local organizations, primarily businesses, to do some "quick" research for them. Students were taught the methods in the first half of the course and in the second half they formed teams and did some interviews/observations, some surveying and some analysis of "texts." In the Fall of 2001, John Linantud, Kevin Ellsworth and I decided to replicate this, but improve the research component, so we endeavored to make the research projects the whole semester. Student groups would be matched up with local organizations, nearly 30 in all (for 170 students), and the groups would plan and carry out quantitative and qualitative research after some initial background research. Finding 30 organizations was no easy task, but somehow we pulled it off with lots of hard effort and reliance on all sorts of connections.

It's intriguing looking back, because by the Fall of 2002, we decided to have groups of 25-30 students work on a project resulting in six projects for 170 students (groups of 85 meet on one day and they meet in three break out sections on the second day), and this semester we have an entire group of 85 students working on ONE project. So over four semesters we've gone from 30 projects to 2 for the 170 students we teach (2 large sections).

While we're still quite committed to the model, we're also committed to improving learning outcomes and doing quality research as well. Unfortunately, the first year's primary discovery was that with a few exceptions many students weren't ready to carry on an entire research project from planning (with assistance) to execution in a semester, especially when multiple research methods were expected. If only one method was required, this would have been far more reasonable, but we were expecting quantitative, qualitative, and background research, and then integrating them. While some student projects were outstanding, most were mediocre and ultimately counterproductive if we wanted organizations to keep working with us. Certainly at 30 organizations a semester, we needed repeat customers. Since the organizations were local nonprofits, we were doing a community service, but the service is ultimately only as good as the research.

Since in our large meetings each of us teaches a method, we've ultimately determined it was better for each of us to do the research planning for the method we were teaching and help bring the students along for the ride as they executed and critiqued the plan. Having all students focused on one research project has also kept the course more coherent and allowed instructors to give better project-related examples. So far the results have suggested that learning outcomes

are improved with students not feeling so overwhelmed. Instructors feel less overwhelmed with the planning of the research, and the course is fitting together quite well.

We all expected it to be a learning experience, and it has been. The Fall 2001 course helped set us on a road that has ultimately worked with lots of reflective thought and revamping of the course. This semester we're excited to be doing research for the Arizona Coalition against Domestic Violence in one project using Department of Public Safety data that has never been done in Arizona, so we've moved from helping nonprofit organizations to possibly making a real impact on public policy (if it turns out Arizona's performance is as poor as we've been told)—not bad for two years of hard work in course development!

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March 3, 2003

APPENDIX 3
BIS 302 SYLLABUS SPRING 2002

Bachelor of Interdisciplinary Studies 302
Interdisciplinary Approaches to Human Inquiry
Spring 2002 -- Syllabus

Course Description and Requirements			Calendar and Readings	
Text	Participation	Reports	January 14 - 23	March 25 - April 10
Web Enhancement	Examinations	Miscellaneous Tasks	January 26 - February 8	April 15 - Final Exam
Attendance	Group Projects	Grades	February 11 - March 20	Fine Print

Meeting Times and Places

Mondays (10:40 Class)
Everyone meets at 10:40-11:55 in ART 220.
Wednesdays
Section Line Number 20949 meets at 10:40-11:55 in SCOB 302 with John Linantud.
John's office hours are 8:00-9:00 MW in UASB 202.
You can contact him by e-mail — johnlinantud@yahoo.com or by phone at 965-6945.
Section Line Number 96877 meets at 10:40-11:55 in LL 147 with David Wells.
David's office hours are 3:00-4:30 MW in UASB 208A.
You can contact him by e-mail — dave.wells@asu.edu or by phone at 727-7038.
Section Line Number 85401 meets at 10:40-11:55 in ECG 315 with Kevin Ellsworth.
Kevin's office hours are 12:30-1:15 MW & 10-11:30 T in UASB 206A.
You can contact him by e-mail — kevin.ellsworth@asu.edu or by phone at 727-7018.

Mondays (1:40 Class)
Everyone meets at 1:40 - 2:55 in ART 220.
Wednesdays
Section Line Number 59549 meets at 1:40 - 2:55 in ECG 335 with John Linantud.
John's office hours are 8:00-9:00 MW in UASB 202.
You can contact him by e-mail — johnlinantud@yahoo.com or by phone at 965-6945.
Section Line Number 64063 meets at 1:40 - 2:55 in SS 211 with David Wells.
David's office hours are 3:00-4:30 MW in UASB 208A.
You can contact him by e-mail — dave.wells@asu.edu or by phone at 727-7038.
Section Line Number 79344 meets at 1:40 - 2:55 in ED 130 with Kevin Ellsworth.
Kevin's office hours are 12:30-1:15 MW & 10-11:30 T in UASB 206A.
You can contact him by e-mail — kevin.ellsworth@asu.edu or by phone at 727-7018.

Course Description

This course, the second of your core Interdisciplinary Studies courses, moves you beyond the theoretical insights of BIS 301 and the intellectual content you have acquired in your concentration area courses and enables you to become a producer (discoverer) of new knowledge. You will develop and refine the skills which will enable you to access knowledge from the "real" world, organize that knowledge, analyze it, and present it to a critical audience. You will acquire the methodological skills, those tools for attaining knowledge, that better enable you to access knowledge from the library and from the world outside the library in both quantitative (reducible to numerical data and statistical analysis) and qualitative (not reducible to numerical data--"thick" or "rich" description) forms. You will work with an organization in the community to apply these methodological skills and complete a substantial group project.

Text

This course will not utilize a bulky, expensive textbook. Most of your learning will take place in our class meetings and through your hands-on experiences. We will, however, provide a few very essential readings in a course packet that will help prepare you for class discussions, examinations, and the group projects. This packet of course readings is available at Alternative Copy. Alternative Copy is located at 204 E. University (behind The Chuckbox) and they can be reached by (480) 829-7992. We suggest that you call ahead to reserve your packet before making the trip. Other essential readings can be accessed for free on the internet and are linked to the calendar below.

Web Enhancement

To take advantage of the web enhancement integrated into this course, you must complete the following two tasks by January 23rd.

First, as part of this course, you will need to enroll at the website http://my.asu.edu/ (note: no "www" in web address). Go to this address and enter your ASURITE User ID and password. Next, click on the "Courses" tab near the top of your screen. Next, click on "Spring 2002," under the "Courses" column on the rights side of your screen. On the next few screens, click on "ASU-Main," "Division of Undergraduate Academic Services," and finally the "enroll" button to the right of "BIS 302: Interdisciplinary Approaches to Human Inquiry (Spring 2002)." After you are enrolled at the course web site, the course will appear automatically under the "Courses" tab when you log on to your my.asu.edu. Numerous course documents will be posted at the web site including lecture notes, special announcements, and information on the organization options for the team project. You can also access your grade, submit papers to your instructor or to your teammates, participate in a discussion/bulletin board, as well as many other things. The group file exchange option will be a critical feature that we will use in this course to ensure that all group members have access to documents or research developed by other group members. This will also be the method of handing in digital copies of group assignments.

Second, because all e-mail for this course goes directly to your asu.edu e-mail address, those of you who use a hotmail, yahoo, netscape, aol, or any other non-asu.edu e-mail account as your primary account, must to have your asu.edu e-mail forwarded to the account you actually use. To accomplish this, go to https://www-sec.asu.edu/emma/ and type in your ASURITE User ID and password. Then click on the "IMAP Forward" option which is found on the far left-hand column about half way down your screen. Next, under the option "Please select how you would like your mail forwarded:" click on the "Other" category and fill in your primary (non-asu.edu) e-mail address in the accompanying box. Finally, click the "Set Forwarding" button. From now on, all mail sent to your asu.edu account, including course updates and intragroup e-mail from your teammates, will be automatically forwarded to your non-asu.edu account.

Requirements

Attendance
You cannot benefit from class if you are not here because what you gain from the process of learning goes well beyond acquiring a few specific bits of information. If you miss class you will have to work harder to learn and remember the material, your understanding will be incomplete, and you will perform more poorly on the reports and examinations. Furthermore, if you miss any class without previously offering a valid excuse you will forfeit that day's examination or participation grade. A valid excuse includes documented medical problems and other documented emergencies if you make them known to your section instructor before class or immediately thereafter.

Participation
Your active participation will constitute a vital element in your and your classmates' learning experience. By discussing the readings and your group projects, you will discover insights that make learning easier, more enjoyable, and more meaningful. By presenting yourself and your ideas well, you will build beneficial relationships and enhance the learning environment of those around you as well. The criteria by which you are evaluated are as follows:

- Presence—you are present in class.
- Preparation—your contribution demonstrates you carefully read the assignment and understand the key points.
- Quality of Argument—you contribute accurate, relevant evidence with sound and insightful reasoning.
- Quality of Expression—your contribution is clear, concise, audible, and directed to your peers.
- Contribution to the Process—your contribution demonstrates that you are listening to others' comments, building upon their ideas, responding to them, respecting them, constructively criticizing them, or asking constructive questions.

Negative Criteria that will lower you score include

- Unresponsiveness—you cannot provide an accurate or thorough answer when called upon.
- Disruptiveness—you disrupt the discussion with social chatter, your contribution is unrelated to the current discussion and is distracting, you are insensitive to others, you attempt to dominate the conversation,

or you arrive to class late or leave early.
- Unprofessional demeanor—you present an image to your sponsoring organization that is less than professional, courteous, and cooperative.

Midterm and Final Examinations
To inspire you to learn the relevant concepts, to master the necessary skills, and to ensure individual accountability, you will complete two 100 point examinations. A midterm examination will be offered in the small (Wednesday) class during regular class time on March 6th. It will cover all readings and course materials covered up to that date. A final examination will be offered in the small group classrooms according to ASU's "Final Exam Schedule"--the 10:40 class will take its final examination on May 6th from 12:20-2:10; the 1:40 class will take its examination on May 8th from 2:40-4:30. The final examination will be comprehensive, covering material from the entire course. Although all materials from the readings, lectures, and discussions are fair game, both exams will focus especially on the concepts and skills you will need to have mastered to have contributed fully to your group reports. If you have fully understood, fully prepared for, and fully participated in your group projects and reports, you will be rewarded on both exams for the knowledge you mastered as part of that preparation and participation. If, however, you relied on other group members to understand and apply those skills and knowledge on the group reports, you will very likely find these two examinations extremely difficult. Both examinations will be closed book. No blue books are required. Early or makeup Midterm Examinations will be available only in accordance with the course attendance policy stated above. Absolutely no early or makeup Final Examinations will be offered.

Group Projects
Throughout this term you will apply your methodological skills in the real world by working together in teams to answer a practical question posed by an organization or small business in your community. Beginning on the second day of class you will choose (or be assigned) an organization to contact and with whom you will negotiate a research project that will meet some of their needs for knowledge and at the same time allow you to apply the methodological skills you will develop in this course. Once you are organized into teams of six students (you can find your team information and names at the my.asu.edu "groups" section), you can then arrange a time to plan your group's project and parcel out the responsibilities that will enable you to complete that project. Part of your grade for all of the group projects will be based on the peer evaluation of your teammates.

Reports
Your group will design, execute, and present three reports as your research project develops and one large report which presents and synthesizes everything you did and discovered.

Each report must be handed to your small group instructor AND submitted electronically through the group file exchange feature (clearly label the title if there are also draft files in the file exchange) through my.asu by the very beginning of class on the day it appears on the calendar. Late reports will be penalized 10 percent immediately and an additional 10 percent for each additional workday they are tardy (including Thursdays and Fridays). These papers must be typed, double-spaced, with one inch margins. To avoid plagiarism and to document your sources, all references must be cited using the academic citation style of your choice (MLA, APA, Turabian, Chicago, etc.). These reports will be graded according to how well they demonstrate your mastery of the key issues and methodological tools, the accuracy and depth of analysis and thought you invested, and the report's clarity of prose, organization, grammar, and spelling. You are required to keep a copy of your report. Detailed instructions for each report are linked to the calendar below.

Each Report will be assessed one Group Grade based on the quality of the report presented. However, it would be unfair to award every member of the group the same grade if only a few members actually performed all of the work while others hoped for a free ride. To prevent the temptation to free ride, or to punish those who nonetheless give in to that temptation, each of your personal grades for each report will be adjusted according to how you and your teammates assess your individual contribution to the group effort. Accurate, honest, and thorough peer evaluations will also expose and create opportunities to resolve problems that sometimes arise within groups. This potential benefit cannot be overstated--the very few groups in past classes who completely melted down could have been salvaged with much less pain and effort if all group members were upfront and honest from the very first peer evaluation. Your peer evaluation forms are found here. This peer evaluation must be submitted by 5:00 p.m. the day after the report's due date or your personal grade for the report will be penalized.

Miscellaneous Tasks
A few final additional tasks are necessary for this course to function properly and small grades have been attached to reward you for your cooperation. First, early on in the semester each of you will need to meet with representatives of you sponsoring organization to coordinate your group's efforts. Second, to meet your ethical responsibilities of a researcher of human subjects, each of you will need to undergo on-line training for the Protection of Human Participants. This training must be completed by April 29 or you will not pass the course. If you complete the training by March 4, you will be awarded 10 points. Finally, to ensure that your Final Report's executive summary is of the finest quality, you are required to submit a draft of that summary when you meet with your instructor on April 22..

Grade Breakdown

Participation/Attendance	50 points (5%)
Contact with your organization (DUE 2/6)	20 points (2%)
Protection of Human Participants Training (DUE 3/4)	10 points (1%)
Background Report with Peer Evaluation (DUE 2/11)	150 points (15%)
Midterm Examination (3/6)	100 points (10%)
Quantitative Reports with Peer Evaluations	150 points (15%)
——Part I -- Draft Survey Questionnaire (DUE 2/18)	
——Part II -- Final Survey Report (DUE 3/25)	
Qualitative Report with Peer Evaluation (DUE 4/15)	150 points (15%)
Executive Summary Draft (DUE 4/22)	20 points (2%)
Final Presentation with Peer Evaluation (4/24 &4/29)	100 points (10%)
Final Report with Peer Evaluation (DUE 4/29)	150 points (15%)
Final Examination (5/6 &5/8)	100 points (10%)

A	900-1000 points (90-100%)
B	800-899 points (80-89.9%)
C	700-799 points (70-79.9%)
D	600-699 points (60-69.9%)
E	0-599 points (0-59.9%)

This syllabus is subject to change. All changes will be announced in class, and you are responsible to note such changes or to make yourself aware of such changes if you are absent when they are announced.

You are responsible to become familiar with and abide by the University's Academic Integrity Policy. Failure to do so could result in your failing an assignment, failing the course, receiving an "EX" (failed due to academic dishonesty) on your permanent transcript, or being expelled from the university. It is worth noting that although many forms of cheating can cause you to fail this course (plagiarizing, copying someone else's work, cheating on the quizzes or exam) the particular form of academic dishonesty that is most likely to get you expelled from the university--"fabrication"--may, unfortunately, also be the greatest temptation in this course. Any attempt to fabricate the data you use in your reports, any false reporting of contacts with your sponsoring organization, and any attempt to doctor the sponsoring organization's evaluation or forge their signatures will be dealt with mercilessly. Purge any temptation from your mind now; it is not worth the risk! For more information see the Student Code of Conduct.

An "Incomplete" will be offered only to a student who has completed a very substantial portion of the course material (including all of the group project), but due to unforeseeable yet well documented personal disaster which occurs after all withdrawal deadlines have passed cannot complete the other course requirements.

APPENDIX 4

BIS 302 SYLLABUS SUMMER 2002

JOHN LINANTUD, Ph.D.
BIS 302: *Interdisciplinary Principles*
Summer 2002 Line Number 64636 TWTH 08:30-10:50 AM ECG G218
Office: UASB 202A Email: johnlinantud@yahoo.com
Office Hours: M 12-2PM or by appointment

BIS 302: *Interdisciplinary Principles* uses lecture and original student research to introduce basic concepts in social science methods and techniques.

1. Instructor Responsibilities
The instructor must know the course material, explain relevant concepts and principles, have an interest in teaching the course, stimulate and facilitate class participation, be available to students outside of normal class hours, treat students fairly, and maximize learning of the course material.

2. Student Responsibilities
Students must attend class, bring the coursepack to each class, complete assigned readings and assignments on time, and participate in class discussion.

Each student must place his or her name on the class listserve with a "check-in" email that identifies you and the name and time of this class. Any student who does not send the check-in email by the end of this week will lose ten points on the first exam. The material distributed on the listserve throughout the semester will carry the same weight as the syllabus.

3. Paper Format Policy

Item	Points
• 12-point font	5
• double-spaced	5
• one-inch side margins, headers, and footers	5
• page numbered	5
• cover page that includes the names of all group members and the date	5
• basic spelling and grammar errors	1 each

Each basic spelling or grammar error by me is worth 1 point for everyone.

4. Grade Scheme

ASSIGNMENT (% OF FINAL GRADE)	DUE	ASSIGNMENT (% OF FINAL GRADE)	DUE
Midterm (20%)	4 June	Research Paper (25%)	25-27 June
Human Participants Certificate (5%)	4 June	Research Presentation (25%)	25-27 June
Final Exam (20%)	20 June	Attendance (5%)	
		TOTAL: 100%	

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BIS 302: INTERDISCIPLINARY PRINCIPLES
SCHEDULE

T 28 MAY	Getting Started USA Weekend.com
W 29 MAY	Research topic selection Davis, "The Logic of Causal Order." Nisbett, "Violence."
TH 30 MAY	Babbie, "Survey Research" and "The Logic of Sampling."
T 4 JUNE	MIDTERM EXAM HUMAN PARTICIPANTS CERTIFICATE DUE Project execution: practice interviews
W 5 JUNE	Project execution: topic interviews and survey design
TH 6 JUNE	Project execution: survey design, cont'd
T 11 JUNE	Project execution: ALL surveys complete
W 12 JUNE	Project execution: data organization
TH 13 JUNE	Project execution: data organization
T 18 JUNE	Project execution: data analysis
W 19 JUNE	Project execution: data analysis
TH 20 JUNE	FINAL EXAM Project execution: instructor review of draft tables
T 25 JUNE	STUDENT PRESENTATIONS and PAPER
W 26 JUNE	STUDENT PRESENTATIONS and PAPER
TH 27 JUNE	STUDENT PRESENTATIONS and PAPER

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BIS 302
SURVEY REPORT AND CLASS PRESENTATION DIRECTIONS

I. RESEARCH DESIGN

A. What is your research question? Why is it important?
B. What are your primary independent and dependent variables?
C. Sampling
- What was the population for your survey?
- How well did your sample represent the demographics of your population?
- Based on the rules of thumb from the notes, what is a statistically valid number of responses for your study? How many did you actually get?

II. DATA ANALYSIS

A. Make a frequency table for each survey question and analyze the results
B. Each person in the group makes and analyzes a bivariate table with a paragraph that:
- Identifies the independent and dependent variables in the table and how they relate to the overall research question
- Evaluates whether the data indicate a causal relationship

III. CONCLUSION

A. What are the strongest causal relationships suggested by your data?
B. What have you uncovered this semester that you find most useful, interesting, or alarming? Why?
C. Each person in the group must suggest one hypothesis based on the research

IV. APPENDIX

The final survey questionnaire

V. CLASS PRESENTATION GRADE CRITERIA

A. Use of multimedia
B. Equal participation by group members
C. Organization and clarity
D. Content and knowledge
E. Energy and enthusiasm

APPENDIX 5
INVITATION TO COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

FREE UNIVERSITY STUDENT RESEARCH OPPORTUNITY
DECEMBER 20, 2001

SUMMARY

I am teaching *Interdisciplinary Research Methods* this spring at Arizona State University and would like to know if you are interested in working with an undergraduate team of 5-6 students. Students receive no financial compensation from your organization or the university. The goal of the project is to provide hands-on research experience to the undergraduates, but your organization and the community at large should also benefit.

SPECIFICS

Time Frame The semester runs from January 14 to May 9, 2002.

Your Time Commitment After an initial meeting with you early in the semester, the team will work under our supervision with NO time commitment from your organization unless you prefer otherwise.

Your Financial Commitment Zero

Choice of Research Topic Yours

How Students Groups Are Formed Students will volunteer for groups based on a brief description of your interests and needs.

Team Goal Students will combine background historical research with surveys, interviews, or observations that address your questions.

What You Receive In May you will receive a complete report and have an opportunity to attend a presentation of the results.

PLEASE CONTACT ME IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS:

John Linantud, Ph.D. (johnlinantud@yahoo.com)
Interdisciplinary Studies Program
Arizona State University
Telephone: 480-965-6945
Fax: 480-727-6344

APPENDIX 6

I. PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS FROM THE PHOENIX, ARIZONA METROPOLITAN AREA, BIS 302: *INTERDISCIPLINARY PRINCIPLES*, 2001-2002[8]

ORGANIZATION	RESEARCH TOPIC
1. Actors Theater	customer satisfaction and advertising
2. Americans for Decency	pornography and values
3. Arizona Lung Association	asthma education in public schools
4. Arizona Mental Health Association	compeer program
5. Arizona Republican Party	student use of internet for political news
6. Arizona State University Club	promotion and membership
7. Arizona Bar Foundation	patriotic education in public schools
8. Arizona Educational Foundation	administrator awareness of national awards programs
9. Arizona Foundation for the Eye	new eye care technology
10. Can Merchant	campus recycling habits
11. Capital Mall Association	urban renewal
12. Great Communities Wilson	local attitudes on Phoenix airport expansion
13. Herberger Theater Center	customer satisfaction and advertising
14. Mesa Southwest Museum	customer satisfaction and advertising
15. Phoenix Community Alliance	urban renewal
16. Planned Parenthood of Central Arizona	teenage attitudes on abortion
17. Red Means Stop Coalition	prevention of red light running
18. Safe Haven	urban renewal
19. Westwood Village Association	historic recognition

II. INDEPENDENT STUDENT RESEARCH TOPICS, BIS 302: *INTERDISCIPLINARY PRINCIPLES*, SUMMER 2002.

1. Television viewing habits
2. Spending on concessions at Arizona Diamondbacks baseball games
3. Local attitudes on campus parking at Arizona State
4. Local attitudes on the prohibition of smoking in Tempe, AZ. restaurants
5. Local student attitudes on illegal downloading of music off the web

[8] This list includes only organizations that worked with John Linantud. In the 2001-02 academic year, over 60 local groups participated in this course.

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Organization/Address: UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON DOWNTOWN	Telephone: 713-221-2774	FAX: 713-221-8144
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